



## STATEMENT OF THE COALITION FOR THE CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL – OCTOBER 14, 2021

### Planning Board Review of Capital Crescent Surface Trail Phase 2 and Capital Crescent Trail Under MD 355

The Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail is a Washington area community group whose primary mission is to preserve, protect, and improve the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT). We have always been a major supporter of a tunnel for the CCT under Wisconsin Avenue, primarily based on safety concerns for the thousands of people who daily use the CCT for recreational or commuting purposes. Consistent with this, our comments regarding in the two CCT projects before the Planning Board focus on safety issues and we would welcome the opportunity to have further discussions about our safety concerns with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation and other stakeholders. Our concerns can be summarized as follows:

**CONGESTION/COLLISION RISK:** We are very concerned about the traffic intersection at Elm Street and 47<sup>th</sup> Street and the feeder routes leading to this location and also about the design of the entrance to the tunnel. The Elm/47<sup>th</sup> junction has the potential to be an extremely dangerous place for anybody crossing it. Elm Street is a major pedestrian thoroughfare for those going to and from the Metro station on Wisconsin Avenue. As a commuter thoroughfare, it is heavily trafficked during the rush hours, the exact time when there will be a heavy surge of commuter cyclists crossing Elm Street on the Surface Trail. There needs to be a plan for dealing with this situation. There are also a number of design issues relating to the feeder routes leading to this intersection that should be addressed in order to better manage traffic along the CCT and reduce the risk of accidents.

**TRAIL WIDTH:** The CCT at Ourisman Plaza is 12 feet wide, as will be the effective width of the CCT tunnel and new section of the CCT paralleling the Purple Line. However, the Surface Trail is narrower; sometimes 10 feet wide and in other places 11 feet wide. It appears that the future CCT section connecting the tunnel to the Purple Line CCT section will also be 11 feet wide. Recognizing that there will be a significant increase in CCT traffic to and from Silver Spring when the Purple Line section is completed, the Surface Trail and the CCT connections to the tunnel should be a consistent 12 feet in width. Creating choke points on the Surface Trail and the CCT only increases the risk of accidents.

For the safety of pedestrians, runners, and cyclists, we urge the Planning Board to recommend that there be further consideration, as well as input from stakeholders, concerning the serious safety issues presented by the two CCT projects under consideration today.